Reduplication in Punjabi: A Morpho-Semantic Phenomenon

1Mehwish Noor ; 2Dr. Riaz Ahmed Mangrio; 3Fakharh Muhabat; 4Mubashir Iqbal

1-3-4 Scholar of MPhil English Linguistics
Department of English, University of Gujrat, Punjab, Pakistan

2Assistant Professor, Department of English, University of Gujrat, Punjab, Pakistan.
riaz.mangrio@uog.edu.pk; noorlinguist@gmail.com; biyakhan38@yahoo.com; mubashir.i@uog.edu.pk

1.0: INTRODUCTION
Punjabi is an agglutinative (Sharma & Aarti, 2011) Indo- Aryan language, largely spoken in South Asian area, and is almost on 13th number of the world ranking. It is a prominent language by owing to a large number of its native speakers (Humayoun & Ranta, 2010) but is less researched language in the linguistic circle of Pakistan.

Punjabi has a rich evidence of this morpho-semantic phenomenon. Reduplication is present in spoken as well as written form. It is a productive word formation process of many languages of the world. It denotes the morphological process through which new words are formed by a total or partial replication of base words or parts of base words (Booij, 2007). Reduplication is a morphological process which is subject to special semantic operations (Hurch et al, 2008). Abbi (1985) is of the view that modernization has affected the reduplication patterns of Punjabi language along with other South Asian languages and it is now restricted to only spoken language.

Reduplication, of various types, occurs in Punjabi. It ranges from total/full Reduplication, such as; gəli gəli, to different types of partial reduplication for instance, øver øver, t̥̄ t̥̄ t̥̄ t̥̄ t̥̄ (vowel based morpheme alternation), hœ hœ (consonant based morpheme alternation), səʃ tʃə mʊtʃ tʃi (Rhyme with suffix) and, j̥̄ j̥̄ (echoic expressions) etc. In fact, Punjabi is also included in those languages where repetition of certain mono syllabic morphemes originate some basic lexical items, such as, baba (father), tʃəfə (uncle), nana (maternal grandfather), d̪a̪d̪a (paternal grandfather), kaka (baby boy), and mama (uncle). It is interesting to note that these lexical items are based on mainly kinship terms.

The study fills the research gap found in previous studies with special reference to Punjabi. The study classifies reduplicated items into different categories and discusses different semantic functions.
It also highlights different facts about the reduplicated items in Punjabi, for instance, reduplication of non-sense/empty words and the position of reduplicants. The study also challenges Abbi’s claim regarding the lack of reduplication of prepositions/postpositions in any language. The paper presents various examples to support the researcher’s observation, in this regard, and also presents instance in contrast to Abbi’s report where non-reduplicated item overlaps the meaning of reduplicated item. The subsequent sections comprise the discussion on the aforementioned topics.

2.0: DISCUSSION ON TOTAL AND PARTIAL REDUPLICATION

Reduplication is very frequent in Punjabi language and it occurs in different ways. The basic types are total and partial reduplication that are being discussed as under.

2.1: Total/ Full Reduplication

A complete repetition of the morphological base refers to total/ full reduplication (Haspelmath 2002: 274). It functions, in Punjabi, as the intensification of the notion expressed as well as for the sense of plurality and distribution.

1a: ẓehr ोdl े .ajax aj े witʃ pʰel gəja. (Distribution, Plurality, Emphasis)

Poison his tissue tissue (N sg) in spread went.

Poison spread throughout his body.

1b: ʰōle ʰōle (adv) mee~ vərsa. (Emphasis)

Slowly slowly rain rained.

It rained slowly.

1c: o tʃori tʃori(N sg) nɛk.kəl gəja. (Emphasis)

He theaft theaft (N sg) get out went.

He went out secretly.

1d: ʰərə ʰərə (adj pl) ha~dʒə oʃi əkʰ ja~ vitʃ sən (Emphasis)

Little little tears her eyes in were.

There were some tears in her eyes.

1e: ɡʰəɾi ɡʰəɾi (N sg) rəb no~ jaq ɞ ɚ kəɾiɡə. (Distribution, Plurality, Emphasis)

Moment moment God to remember should.

One should remember God at every moment/ all the time.

The above examples express total/full reduplication of nouns, adverb and adjective which perform different semantic functions. In 1a, the noun .ajax is reduplicated and this morpho-semantic construction stands for a distributed meaning. It not only shows the distribution but also the way the entire body becomes poisonous. The meanings are extended by showing the intensity of the action that has been done along with the plurality of the term .ajax (each and every). Overall, the expression exhibits that not one, two but many, rather all the
tissues of the body are affected by the poison.

The example (1b) shows that the repetition of the adverb hole puts the emphasis on the manner in which the action is performed. The contextual connotations that are associated with the rain in Punjab region make the expression more meaningful. So to say, the way it rained is very much meaningful to the speech community of an agricultural based region. That is why the reduplicant is used for the expression of emphasis. The next example reveals an interesting semantic function of the reduplication of a noun. In (1c), the noun tfori ‘theaft’ is reduplicated, it functions as an adverb. The noun tfori becomes an adverb of the verb ‘went out’. The semantic shows the emphasis on the way he went out. (1d) presents reduplication of a plural adjective t̪họre which intensifies the meaning of the adjective as well as highlights the noun hə̀dzọ to which it modifies. The intensity and emphasis might be loosening in case of the use of its non-reduplicated base. The oblique form of singular noun, in 1e, is functioning as adverbial phrase. The repetition of the noun ḡari exhibits three meanings simultaneously; distribution, plurality and emphasis. ḡari ḡari extends the meaning of base to a sense of plurality out of the singular reduplicated word. The meaning overlaps the base into a sense of completion means all/each and every. The functions of both (1a) and (1e) are quite similar; both reduplicated items are nouns and exhibiting the semantics of plurality, distribution and emphasis. Furthermore, one noun is in oblique form whereas the other is in nominative form. Both are proving additional meaning to their respective verbs.

Partial reduplication is not commonly found in all languages. Kluge (2014), in Papua, finds partial reduplication, in Malay language, less frequent as compared to total reduplication but it is very common in Punjabi.

2.2: Partial Reduplication

Partial reduplication comprises the repetition of only a part of the morpho-semantic structure resulting in a modification in the meaning (Moravcsik 1978: 304, cited in Kluge, 2014). It is further sub-categorized in three groups; alternation of vowel based morphemes, alternation of onset based morphemes and rhyming words. Punjabi exhibits reduplication in all the said subcategories. Such reduplicants, sometimes, execute different semantics from their base forms other than distribution, iteration and emphasis.

2.2.1: Alternation of Vowel based Morphemes

In this type of partial reduplication, vowel based morphemes are altered in the reduplicants to form new words.

2a: ko ṭja̞ na:l ʧjaɾ ʧjaɾ na kəro
Girls with tease.RED not do.
Do not harass the girls.
2b: bidžli na:l tfẹr tfaːt na koro
Electricity with (mischievous) play. RED not do
Do not play with electricity.

In above examples the same reduplicated item exhibits two different roles according to the context. In both the sentences (2a and 2b), the construction is imperative with the same noun tfẹr tfaːt. The base of the said reduplicant is tfẹr (to irritate/to tease) a noun which refers to anything which irritates someone. The alternation of vowel to form its reduplicant forms new compound, which performs the function of object. It denotes to a new semantics in the above mentioned examples (2a and 2b) quite different to its base. Furthermore, the semantics of the same lexical verb is also different from aforementioned functions.

2c: he:r raNdʒa di tfʰaka tfʰaki joro ho gai
Heer Ranjha (genitive marker) eye contact (between lovers) start be went
A love relation (emotional) began between Heer and Ranjha.

In (2c) vowel alternation shows again a new form of meaning. The base word tfʰaka means hesitation and illusion. The reduplicated item tfʰaka tfʰaki refers to totally a new thing that is an emotional attachment that develops among the lovers. The English equivalences are unable to exhibit the true meaning of the term tfʰaki because it is cultural specific term. Along with vowel alternation further are discussed other sorts of

2.2.2: Alternation of Onset/ Consonant Based Morphemes

New words are formed through reduplication, sometimes, by the alternation of onset and/or consonant based morphemes.

3a: səʧ sof ke o hʌkka bʌkka re ɡəja
Truth listen to he stunned leave went
He was stunned to listen to the truth.

3b: o ɬe ɬehat ɬa ɬe.
He (emphatic particle) totally fit/healthy is
He is completely fit and fine.

3c: mæli gæli dere ɬe bətʰe si:
Visitors sitting house (in forms) in sitting were
The visitors were sitting in the sitting house at forms.

3d: kaːrə bæɡla ne kin min lai e
Black clouds (case marker) raining put is
It is raining (slowly) due to the dark clouds.

In the above examples the reduplicated items exhibit a variety of semantics. In (3a) the reduplicated item hʌkka bʌkka refers to the condition of
sudden shock. In fact, the base word ‘hakka’ is a nonsense word so the repulicant ‘bakka’ itself cannot be meaningful (Mangrio, unpublished). But when it is partially reduplicated, it contains a particular meaning and stands as a compound of Punjabi. Similarly in (3b), hatta katta is the reduplication of the base word hatta; a non-sense/empty word occurs. It is partially copied and pasted with a slight alternation of its initial morpheme and results in the formation of an adjective hatta katta which refers to a fit and healthy person. In (3d) kin min shows another example of empty/nonsense words’ reduplication. Both of the constituents kin and min are meaningless if are used separately but are meaningful when are used together. Nadarajan (2007) reports the same with reference to Malay language where reduplicants may and may not have meaning on their own in their non-reduplicated forms.

3e: o tʃʰuʃʰi muʃʰi ronʃa
He falsely cry
He was falsely crying.

In this particular example (3e) tʃʰuʃʰi muʃʰi in fact, refers to a fake action of crying that is not real. In this particular example reduplication is functioning as a decrease in the force of the verb to which it is modifying contrary to its traditional function of intensification. This is the lexical semantic feature of the lexeme tʃʰuʃʰi muʃʰi which enjoys the certain meaning after the reduplication of the base tʃʰuʃʰi. The reduplicant muʃʰi is putting an emphasis on its base but tʃʰuʃʰi muʃʰi whenever is attached to any verb shows the falsity of the action, for example tʃʰuʃʰi muʃʰi rosaja, tʃʰuʃʰi muʃʰi lərja etc.

2.2.3: Rhyming Words / Echoic Expressions

This type of reduplication comprises recurrence of words for artistic and/or poetic purposes. Echoic expressions are, most of the time, context and culture specific (Nadarajan, 2007). It may be repetition of parts of words including prime onomatopoeia and of sub-onomatopoeia.

4a: o inni tʃiʃni vetʃja
He cheap things sales
He sales cheap items.

4b: unne aɾʃa kʰəɾ one pone vetʃdəʃa
He (case form) own house low-price sold
He sold his house at a low-price.

4c roʃi foʃi kʰə ke dʒaɾʃa
Bread (reduplicant) eat to go
Have a meal before leaving.

In (4a) inni chinni both of the constituents are echoing to each other. The
word *inni* is a meaningful expression in Punjabi which indicates a certain amount; this much and that much. In its reduplicated form, it means cheap or low-cost things. Correspondingly, in (4b) the echoic reduplicant *one* stands for none whereas the base *pone* denotes ¼ quantity of something. *One pone* simply does not mean low-price in Punjabi, rather it stands for a rate less than that the current market value of something. The next example (4c) reflects cultural specific perspective in which the reduplication *rotī foṭi* reflects the entire cultural traits of the speech community to which it belongs. The base word *rotī* literally means bread but in Punjabi it refers to entire meal for instance, *me̅̄ rotī kʰaːtʃi e̅̄* means, I have to take meal. On the other hand, the reduplicant *foṭi* is functioning as the distribution and emphasis. It denotes the other edibles like *rotī* (bread) so, as a whole the term *rotī foṭi* stands for entire meal with its all possible variations such as; lunch, dinner or any other refreshment served.

This type of reduplication also contains natural synchronization between the sound and the sense of words. These onomatopoeic words are related to the language to which they belong. There seems certain universality in the composition and perception of the speakers of the particular languages.

4d: mera di̇l tʃʰ k tʃʰ k kʰaːm əːɡa
Mine heart (heart beating sound) do does
My heart started beating (fast)./ My heart beat accelerated.

4e: tʃʰaːm tʃʰaːm mi̇ vəɾsa
(sound of raining) rain
It rained.

4f: ʃʰaːm mi̇ aː ho aː ho
(The) bride (case marker) yes yes did.
The bride accepted (the marriage proposal).

In (4d), the sound correspondent of heart beat is reduplicated. Although, they present total reduplication yet due to the fact that they are onomatopoeic echoic reduplication, which may be total or partial reduplication, thus they are being discussed in this section. This kind of reduplication is also, mostly, cultural specific that is why it is subject to inappropriateness for the natives of L1 (here, Punjabi) while translated. The term *tʃʰaːm tʃʰaːm* refers to a variety of emotional states of mind such as, excitement, fear, amusement and love. These kinds of expressions are unavailable in English with reference to the meaning attached to *tʃʰaːm tʃʰaːm* in Punjabi. Similarly, (4e) exhibits another fact regarding context based reduplication with reference to onomatopoeic (the formation of word with association of its natural sound) reduplication in which *tʃʰaːm tʃʰaːm* reflects the pleasant musical sound of raining. The base *tʃʰaːm* does not stand for anything meaningful, but its reduplication refers to a positive rather pleasant connotation attached to the way it is raining. This kind of use of language performs poetic function. In Asian context rain matters a lot to people because
there is found an entire season of bərsa:t (rain). That is to say, different adjectival terms exist in the language in this regard for instance, rim dʒim, ɡən gərdʒ, tıp tıp, etc.

The example (4f) is strictly culture-bound. The reduplication (a:ho a:ho) stands for the consent given by the bride and bridegroom at the time of nika:(h) (the Muslims’ official sermon for marriage). The base word a:ho means yes in English while its reduplication means an official consent given by the wedding couple.

The general patterns of reduplication in Punjabi have been discussed. Now, the discussion moves to counter discussion regarding previous work done on reduplication.

3.0: SOME IMPORTANT FACTS ABOUT REDUPLICATION IN PUNJABI

Besides the above discussion, reduplication in Punjabi has many characteristics. Contra to Keane (2005) and in support of Mangrio (unpublished), the reduplication of nonsense/empty words is an interesting fact in Punjabi. Keane (2005, 241) claims that bases of reduplicants are always meaningful. The reduplication of these meaningless bases plays an important role in the semantics of these expressions. Some of the examples have already been discussed above. Two more examples are as under.

5a: bəłe bəłe  iːɡ də  tʃən nazər a: gəja
       Hurrah hurrah Eid (genitive marker) moon sight come went

   Hurrah! The Eid moon has been sighted.

5b: vilaː tʃə: ke  oɡi  te bəłe bəłe  ho  gəi
   Abroad go from his (emphatic particle) value has went
   He is being valued after going abroad./ He became influential/prominent after going abroad.

5c: vaːh vaːh  ki  suːɡ e tʃə:  ɡə
   Wow! Wow what taste is tea (genitive marker)
   Wow! What a great taste the tea has./ Wow! What a tasty tea it is.

5d:  aːdʒ kəl  ɡəfʃər  vitʃ  odi bəɾi  vaːh vaːh e
   Nowadays office in his very praise is
   He is very popular in the office, nowadays.

bəłe bəłe is a common interjection in Punjabi. (5a) and (5b) describe the semantic variation in two different ways. It is evident that reduplication and its use totally depend upon the native speakers of any language. In (5a) it has been used as the expression of joy and celebration. Eid is the most important religious occasion of Muslims. The occurrence of this event depends on the new moon sight. So, the excitement and delight is reflected by bəłe bəłe. On the other hand, in (5b), the same interjection is used as the object of the sentence, hence, a noun phrase. Here it is not used as an
expression of joy rather it depicts value, regard and/or importance that the person is enjoying after going abroad. Similarly, in (5c) and (5d), two different semantic functions of the same exclamatory particle va:h va:h are shown. va:h basically, does not perform any grammatical function and has semantic functions. The reduplication of this, apparently, empty word assigns different interpretations in different contexts. In (5c) it has been used an exclamatory expression whereas in (5d) it performs diverse semantics. It gives the meaning of popularity and regard that the person is enjoying at the office these days.

There are various examples of reduplication of nonsense/empty words in Punjabi such as həbbəרג əbbərg (confusion), halla gollə (celebration and noise), nət kətə (naughty) and u:l dzəlu:l (stupid) etc.

The position of reduplicant is an important phenomenon to be discussed here. Generally, the reduplicant appears after the base word but in Punjabi, it may appear even before the base word. For instance,

6a. oqa koə əqa əqa ənə
   His any news/sign is not
   There is no news of him.

6b. hər ərə vəyəra əχə
   Every stranger/unknown there
   Every unrelated (intruder) was sitting there.

6c. o a:le ətole kərdə si
   He lame excuses did was
   He was making lame excuses.

6d. ədz kəl ənə ənə ənənə
   Now a day their (genitive marker) breakup is
   Now a day, there is breakup between them.

In the above examples reduplicated constituents are appearing before the base words. In (6a), the base word pəta refers to address, but its reduplication forms a new compound which means any news or current status of anyone or anything. On the other hand, in (6b), the base word vəyəra refers to something extra or additional and its reduplication refers to unrelated or unwanted person. In this way an emphatic particle functions as a noun phrase when reduplicated.

Similarly in (6c), the base word ətole refers to ‘delay or postpone something’, whereas its reduplication in which the copied constituent appears before the base word stands for ‘lame excuses’. In this way, a lexical verb forms a noun phrase when reduplicated. In (6d), the base word ənənə is a lexical verb which denotes ‘to make’. The reduplicant ən is a negative prefix, here partial reduplication of the base word ənə which functions as a noun phrase. There are some other examples to validate this observation such as; one pone (cheap), vər səver (delay), həp səf (affordability), and
"hatta katta" (healthy) etc. In all these examples the initial constituents are the reduplicants and the second constituents are the base words. There seems that this type of reduplication forms new lexical items which offer new meaning.

The researcher's observation is contrary to Abbi's (1985, 161) claim that prepositions and postpositions are never reduplicated in any language. In fact, total and partial reduplication of postpositions in Punjabi exists and is discussed as under.

7a: pʰ u:k़ा oṭṭe oṭṭe ḍaṇḍa reja (Intensification)
   Balloon over/upper/above (reduplicant) goes (past imperfective)
   The balloon blew/went up higher and higher.

7b: gʌddi dे ḍʰalle ḍʰalle zəŋ lægia si (Emphasis, distribution)
   Car (genitive marker) under/beneath (reduplicant) rust put was
   The car was rusted beneath/underneath.

7c: səɾək dे laːge laːge/naːl naːl tfəlλe ao
   (Emphasis)
   Road (genitive marker) beside/alongside (reduplicant) walked come
   Keep coming/moving beside the road.

7d: dəkʰ oḍe əṇḍəɾ əṇḍəɾ/ viʃ viʃ ratʃ vəs gəja (Emphasis)
   Sadness his inside inside lodged went
   The sadness lodged inside him.

7e: o əɾʌve˜ əɾʌmɾe˜ səɾʌmɾe˜ be ke gəlla˜ əɾʌgə si
   They both (reduplicant) in front of(each other) sit to talk(plural) doing were
   They were talking while sitting in front of each other.

In the above examples, postpositions of Punjabi are reduplicated. First four examples (7a-7d) show total reduplication with their traditional semantics in which reduplication is used for intensification in the meaning of the base word oṭṭe (in 7a) which shows a gradual increase in the height. oṭṭe refers to direction as well as height. It means that the reduplication of postposition provides extended meaning to the base word. In (7b), ḍʰalle ḍʰalle means only underneath. The base word, ḍʰalle, in isolation, refers to a general talk about the rusting of car but its reduplication specifies that the car was rusted only underneath and not from anywhere else. Moreover, in (7c), səɾək dे laːge laːge/naːl naːl shows emphasis which lacks if it is used in isolation. Similarly, in (7d) əṇḍəɾ əṇḍəɾ/ viʃ viʃ also displays emphasis means sadness is deep-rooted inside her, whereas the last example (7e) exhibits partial reduplication. A new lexical item is formed with the help of reduplication which shows extensive and exclusive meanings. The word refers to face to face interaction. (7e) denotes their (participant’) position and indicates that they were in front of each other during conversation.
The researcher finds another interesting fact of reduplication in Punjabi. Abbi (1985, 164) reports the lack of any example where reduplicated and non-reduplicated forms of the base word overlaps in meaning.

The word $tʰaːtʰ$ and its reduplicated (partially reduplicated) form $tʰaːtʰ\, baːtʰ$ may overlap or replace each other in Punjabi syntactic construction without leaving the sentence ungrammatical. For example;

8a: $o̱d̪e\, təɾe\, bəɾe\, tʰaːtʰ\, nə̃$

His (emphatic particle) very pompous are

He is living in a pompous manner.

8b: $o̱d̪e\, təɾe\, bəɾe\, tʰaːtʰ\, baːtʰ\, nə̃$

His (emphatic particle) very pomp and show are

He is living with a great pomp and show.

In this particular example the base word $tʰaːtʰ$ (in 8a) and its reduplication $tʰaːtʰ\, baːtʰ$ (8b) reflect, more or less, the same meaning. The reduplicant simply replicates the base. On this note, it is evident that Punjabi is enriched with reduplication which performs varied linguistic functions.

4.0: CONCLUSION

Summing up the discussion, the study shows total and partial reduplication with varied semantic functions. It shows that the semantics of reduplication is not restricted to its traditional functions; rather it performs extensive semantic functions according to the context. It displays that partial reduplication is responsible for a variety of different semantic functions. The study confirms Nadarajan’s (2007) observation with reference to Malay language that reduplicated nouns function as adverbal phrases as shown in (1a) and (1b).

Firstly, the study discusses reduplication with reference to its classifications and semantics. Secondly, it opines reduplication of nonsense/empty words in contrast to Keane’s (2005) observation and posits a number of examples to nullify the claim that the base words of reduplicated items are always meaningful. Thirdly, it offers variation in the position of reduplicants found in Punjabi. Fourthly, it challenges Abbi’s (1985) claim that pre/postpositions of any language may not be reduplicated and presents counter arguments in this regard. Fifthly, it gives an example, contra Abbi (1985), showing the meaning of reduplicated and non-reduplicated forms overlapping each other. Both are acceptable as well as meaningful.

Finally, the paper supports the views of Novotna (2000) that reduplication is an important morpho-semantic phenomenon which plays a vital role in word-formation process of any language.

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